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Health and Government Operations
Committee
Subcommittees

Health Occupations and Long-Term Care

Public Health and
Minority Health Disparities

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Testimony in Support of House Bill 103 - State Board of Social Work Examiners - Temporary License to Practice Social Work

Good afternoon Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about House Bill 103.

House Bill 103 will permit the State Board of Social Work Examiners to issue temporary licenses to practice for applicants who, except for passing an examination, have met all other education and experience requirements to be licensed as social workers. The Board may exercise this rule and issue a temporary license if the examination is unavailable to an applicant for at least seven (7) days. Further, the license would be valid until one-hundred-eighty (180) days after the examination becomes readily available.

The authority on whether to issue a temporary license to a social worker applicant who has not yet passed the final examination remains at the discretion of the State Board in the instance of administrative delay. Further, the Board also maintains authority to restrict or regulate the temporarily licensed social worker(s) however it sees fit.

Public health and other emergencies, like the COVID-19 pandemic, result in systematic disasters that cripple our infrastructures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, testing centers were forced to close which prevented social work students from taking their final licensing examination. This limited work opportunities for students and prevented employers from being able to employ enough workers for their businesses. House Bill 103 provides a remedy for that.

I have introduced an amendment to the bill which gives greater discretion to the Board in instances of administrative delay not caused by unforeseen circumstance. You can find this amendment submitted with my testimony.

House Bill 103 provides an opportunity for the Board to issue temporary licenses as a backup provision in response to emergency crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 103.